

**Support** Testimony for **HB 5170** - AN ACT CONCERNING THE TETHERING AND SHELTERING OF DOGS.

Dear Honorable Members of the Planning and Development Committee

My name is Karen Laski and I live in Manchester. I am on the board of CT Votes for Animals, a non-profit organization with over 5000 members.

I have spent many hours of my life attempting to get relief for dogs kept outside. Every dog needs a comfortable place to rest and get exercise and they are not afforded that in Connecticut. I've seen so many dogs on short, twisted chains next to a big pipe, trash container, igloo or nothing at all. Often they have to lie on a littered area of dirt, hard concrete or tar. These dogs suffer in the heat and cold. No breed is immune to harsh weather since every dog is different.

My dog, Geyser, was very sensitive to cold or heat even when I kept his hair very long in winter and shaved him in the summer. While walking him in cold weather, Geyser would often stop and lift one of his paws and that would be my signal to stop and finish the walk. I can't imagine what it's like for dogs who have no respite from cold or heat and can never be comfortable.

All dogs are feeling creatures no matter what we "use" them for. They are not lawn ornaments, outside alarms or robots if they are used for sport. They need a refuge from harsh weather and a good place to rest their bones. Many dogs kept outside are old, sick or lame. There is no way we can justify this cruelty. If a person can't afford to keep a dog in humane conditions, then maybe it is time for that dog to be taken to a rescue.

Please let this important bill 5170 pass committee and treat our best friends with compassion. Thank you.